

LAURA

Rodriguez-Carbone for
Lakewood City Council

WARD 1

Opening Statement on Your Candidacy (200 words)

I am running for city council so that my experience, and true desire to serve, can bring positive change to Ward 1 and to Lakewood.

Months of talking with residents have demonstrated that many in our ward feel that their voices haven't been heard. I have learned more about the needs of seniors in our neighborhood, the need for improved transportation, the health disparities that exist, and the public health challenges of losing our hospital. Other residents spoke about concerns with development, traffic safety, lack of affordable housing, and the loss of jobs.

I am the only candidate in this race who has identified issues, offered solutions, and has proven experience finding resources to fund them. The relationships I have built with our state legislators will help bring state funding to Lakewood and make sure we aren't leaving money on the table.

Our community can depend on me to stand up for residents, work hard, be a proactive and accessible representative on council, and lead with vision and solutions.

Why are you seeking this office? What improvements would you like to make? What is your platform?

Lakewood is my home, and I am running for city council to help our community. I will improve communication between residents and council. I will seek to improve transportation options, accessibility, traffic safety and parking by establishing a new Lakewood Community Circulator, and working with residents to address traffic concerns. I hope to help close the healthcare gap experienced by our most vulnerable residents, seniors and children, by reestablishing Lakewood's Health Department. I also believe that we need to establish balanced standards when considering new development, and to look at what works for, and is needed by, our community.

How would you improve communication between City Council and constituents?

Active outreach to the community from City Council is crucial to improving communication with residents. Lakewood city council has never had regular office hours for residents. I would establish those, as well as home visits by appointment for our elderly and disabled residents.

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Lakewood's block clubs are made up of people who give of their own time to organize to improve the quality of life in their neighborhood. Some block clubs are more connected than others, and I believe as a representative of the community on city council, there is more we can do to help foster opportunities for service and communication among those involved in block clubs. We should assist with the collaboration and relationship building between block clubs, so we can work together to share information, identifying areas of potential concern and act collectively to address concerns as neighbors, where appropriate.

I support the proposed legislation requiring timely response to public records requests. Public information belongs to our residents and we need to make sure the framework is in place to provide a timely response to public records requests.

Please list one great challenge and one great opportunity facing Lakewood in the coming years, and how you'd prioritize it on council?

I believe the greatest challenge and the greatest opportunity facing Lakewood in the coming years is housing affordability. Housing affordability affects everyone in Lakewood, but especially fixed-income seniors and families. We have the opportunity to take thoughtful steps to ensure that families and seniors can continue to make Lakewood their home for years to come.

On council, I would introduce an inclusionary zoning ordinance that would require developers to include a percentage of affordable units in their building plans in order to obtain development rights on new construction.

A policy that utilizes inclusionary zoning would allow the city to create and expand a balanced availability of below market rate housing options, while simultaneously expanding affordable housing options for renters and buyers. In addition, incorporating more green technology (i.e. solar panels, low flow fixtures, low emissivity windows, LED lighting, and energy efficient appliances) into new development that reduces overall housing costs will make buying and renting in Lakewood more affordable.